

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9077

S E C R E T GABORONE 2244

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, BC, RH

SUBJECT: MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT KHAMA

REF: STATE 296385

1. AS REPORTED SEPTEL, PRESIDENT KHAMA HAS JUST THIS MORNING RETURNED FROM HOSPITALIZATION IN JOHANNESBURG, AND FACES A RECOVERY PERIOD OF UNDETERMINED DURATION. THEREFORE, EMBASSY WAS UNABLE TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO HIM IN PERSON, AND DCM HANDED IT TO MINEXTAFF SECRETARY MPOTOKWANE AT 1100 HOURS AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT. MPOTOKWANE PROMISED TO SEE THAT PRESIDENT RECEIVED SECRETARY'S LETTER THIS DATE. HE SAID HE WAS SURE THE PRESIDENT WOULD WANT TO RESPOND TO IT IN WRITING, ALTHOUGH HE OF COURSE COULD NOT SAY HOW SOON THAT MIGHT BE.

2. IN DELIVERING THE MESSAGE, DCM SOUGHT TO ELICIT REACTION FROM MPOTOKWANE (AND, HOPEFULLY, SOME POSITIVE ACTION ON PART OF GOB AT GENEVA) BY EMPHASIZING THE USG'S SERIOUS CONCERN THAT FAILURE OF CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS TO ACT POSITIVELY AND QUICKLY NOW MIGHT WELL RESULT IN COMPLETE FAILURE OF THE GENEVA TALKS. MPOTOKWANE ASKED REASON FOR FEELING OF PESSIMISM ON PART OF USG. DCM RESPONDED THAT THE THOUGH IT MIGHT BE RELATED TO THE MORE INTRANSIGENT POSTURE ADOPTED BY SMITH IN THE WAKE OF HIS RECENT MILITARY SUCCESSES.

3. MPOTOKWANE SAID HE HAD NOT SPOKEN WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MOGWE SINCE THE BREAKTHROUGH ACHIEVED AT GENEVA ON THE DATE FOR FULL TRANSITION. HE THEREFORE WAS RATHER SURPRISED

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THAT FOLLOIWN THIS RATHER OPTIMISTIC DEVELOPMENT, THERE SHOULD

BE PESSIMISM. HE ASKED WHAT IN PARTICULAR HAD CAUSED THE DETERIORATION IN GENEVA, ESPECIALLY STRANGE TO HIM SINCE THE U.K. HAD EVIDENCED A WILLINGNESS TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT. DCM POINTED OUT THAT SECRETARY HAD SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO EXTREME POSITIONS ADOPTED BY ZIMBABWE NATIONALISTS, SPECIFICALLY THEIR DEMANDS FOR AN IMMEDIATE SHIFT TO MAJORITY RULE AND REFUSAL OF A TWO TIER SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. MPOTOKWANE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THESE PROBLEMS, AND THAT HE HIMSELF HAD BELIEVED THE NATIONALISTS AT TIMES WERE DEMANDING TOO MUCH, PARTICULARLY ON THE MOW-RESOLVED DATE QUESTION. HE THOUGHT THE BEST CHANCE OF COMPROMISE WOULD BE FOR THE U.K. TO ASSUME A SORT OF HIGH COMMISSIONER ROLE, ALONG WITH THE TWO DISPUTED PORTFOLIOS OF DEFENSE AND JUSTICE.

4. FINALLY, MPOTOKWANE REITERATED HIS GOVERNMENT'S VITAL CONCERN IN THE SUCCESS OF THE GENEVA TALKS. THE DCM REINFORCED THIS THOUGHT BY RECALLING KHAMA'S CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT, WHEN HE CALLED ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ASSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE TALKS, REMINDING HIS LISTENERS THAT THE ALTERNATIVE WAS RACIAL WAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

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